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**Amendments to the specification:**

Please amend the paragraph on page 15, line 9 to page 16, line 2 as follows:

In order to estimate the amount of light  $x_i$  incident upon the subject pixel, the outputs of the subject pixel and the neighboring pixels within a prescribed pixel region are examined as follows. The term "pixel region" as used in this specification refers to a prescribed region on an imaging screen within which is included a number of pixels, including the subject pixel. The output levels of some or all of the number of pixels are examined to estimate the amount of light incident upon the subject pixel. For example, the outputs of the subject pixel and other neighboring pixels, which are located along the upper, lower, left and right sides of the subject pixel, are examined. Hereinafter, an example having an amount  $x_0$  of incident light will be explained. If the number of pixels having the same type of defect is less than or equal to half of the number of the selected pixels, it is possible to obtain an output level of a normal pixel by obtaining the median  $y_0$  of the output levels of the selected pixels through a median filter represented by Expression (8) below.